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## NEWS RELEASE - FIRE UPDATE

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**CONTACT:** Laura Smith

**DATE:** September 6, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Fuels throughout northern Idaho are extremely dry. Residents and visitors are reminded to use extreme caution in order to avoid human-caused fires that will further strain already stretched firefighting resources.

### **NEZ PERCE NATIONAL FOREST:**

The Meadow Fire on the Red River Ranger District is burning actively and is currently 6500 acres. It is located approximately 12 airline miles southeast of Elk City in the Red River area. Resources include 83 personnel with equipment ordered.

Primary emphasis will continue to be structure protection along Forest Road 234 between Red River Corrals and Red River Hot Springs. Fire crews will try to establish an anchor point near Granite Ridge on the southeast side of the fire and identify opportunities for hand and machine lines on the west side of the fire. Hazards including numerous spot fires and snags will also make direct attack on the fire difficult.

**For public safety, a new, larger area closure went into effect September 5 which includes roads and trails in the vicinity of the Meadow Fire. Access to the forest will be closed at the following locations: Forest Road 234 (except to local residents) and the Magruder Corridor (Montana Road) at the Red River Ranger Station; Poet Creek on the east side of the Magruder Corridor; and Black Hawk Mountain.**

**Turman's Type 2 Incident Management Team is managing the Meadow Fire and is based out of the Red River Ranger Station. For more information on the Meadow Fire, please contact Information Officer Mike Cole at (208) 842-9225.**

The 222 Fire located near Dixie on the Red River District is demobbed.

The Twin Lakes Fire on the Salmon River District is contained. No new fires were reported on the Salmon River, Red River, Clearwater or Moose Creek Ranger Districts.

### **CLEARWATER NATIONAL FOREST:**

The Powell Ranger District's Rabbit Fire, a remote wildland fire use fire that is being allowed to burn for its resource benefits, is now estimated at 900+ acres. The fire is located approximately 8 airline miles south of Powell (and roughly four miles north of Elk Summit).

Concerns about public safety prompted forest officials to close several roads and many trails in the Elk Summit area. Closures affect Forest Roads No. 360 (Elk Summit), 358 and 359 and Forest Trails No. 79, 45, 486, 1, 22, 28, 6, 10, 50, and 903.

The Milepost 128 Fire, located on the Lochsa Ranger District, was remapped and is currently 97 acres. It is located north of U.S. Highway 12 about 55 miles east of Kooskia. Flaggers continue to direct traffic on the highway. Suppression tactics include a helicopter making water drops.

No new fires were reported on any of the Clearwater National Forest's Ranger Districts.

Several wildland fire use fires in the Clearwater National Forest's backcountry are being allowed to burn to improve forest conditions and big-game habitat. Information about these fires is posted on the Forest's website: <http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/clearwater>.

**A new trail closure on the Powell Ranger District is in effect due to the Warm Springs WFU Fire (currently 50 acres): A segment of the Warm Springs Trail 49 is closed from the junction of Trail 213 to the junction of Trail 24.**

For public safety, additional road and trail closures remain in effect. Specific information is posted at: [http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/clearwater/VisitorInfo/Assets/travel\\_info](http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/clearwater/VisitorInfo/Assets/travel_info).

### **HEAVENS GATE COMPLEX**

The Heaven's Gate Complex is currently 26,000 acres. It is 50% contained with a new full containment date projected for November 15.

The Heavens Gate Complex is currently made up of the following four fires: Black Butte Fire, located in the Gospel-Hump Wilderness is estimated at 22,295 acres (includes the Plummer Spot); Green Acres Fire, located on the Nez Perce National Forest and Hells Canyon National Recreation Area is estimated at 3,625 acres; Horse Heaven Fire, (south of Green Acres Fire) in Hells Canyon is estimated at 55 acres; and McCrea Creek Fire on the Nez Perce NF is estimated at 25 acres.

Current Resources: One Type 1 hotshot crew, two Type 2 crews, fifteen engines & water tenders, one dozer, five helicopters. 238 total personnel assigned to the fire.

Grant's Northern Rockies Type 2 Incident Management Team is managing the complex.

Air patrol will continue on the Green Acres, Horse Heaven, and McCrea fires and the eastern flank of the Black Butte fire, as determined by the smoke inversion and visibility. Crews will construct handline in the Kelly Mountain trail area, in preparation for future burn out operations. Crews will begin structure protection efforts around structures in the Florence

area and will develop structure protection plans for additional structures with a potential future threat. Crews will patrol the Big Salmon road south of the Salmon River and the 394 Road on the western flank, checking for spot fires. An engine crew will patrol and mop up hot spots on the Green Acres fire.

Due to the Black Butte Fire, an area closure is in effect for the southwestern one-third of the Gospel Hump Wilderness south of Forest Road 444 and north of the Salmon River. An area is closed west of the Wilderness from the mouth of Kelly Creek on the Salmon River north to Little Slate Saddle then along Forest Road 394 to just east of Florence, tying back into the Wilderness north of Road 9922. This latter area closure is a new closure effective September 2 and was done due to the spread of the Black Butte fire westward. Forest roads 394 and 643 just west of the area closure are also closed.

Due to the Green Acres fire, an area closure is in effect for that portion of the Hells Canyon Wilderness from Windy Saddle north to Forest Road 1819 and west to the Snake River. Seven Devils Road (517) and Seven Devils Campground have been reopened; however, trails 124, 140, 58 and 101 north from the campground remain closed. The area to the south of the Seven Devils camp is open but is experiencing extremely smoky conditions.

**Please contact Information Officer Ted Pettis at (208) 628-3589 for further information regarding the Heavens Gate Fire Complex.**

#### **OTHER AGENCIES**

No new fires were reported by Craig Mountain (IDL), Maggie Creek (IDL), CPTPA or the BLM.

**Additional information regarding the current status of fires and related closures is available at: <http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/nezperce/gvc> or <http://www.inciweb.org>**

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